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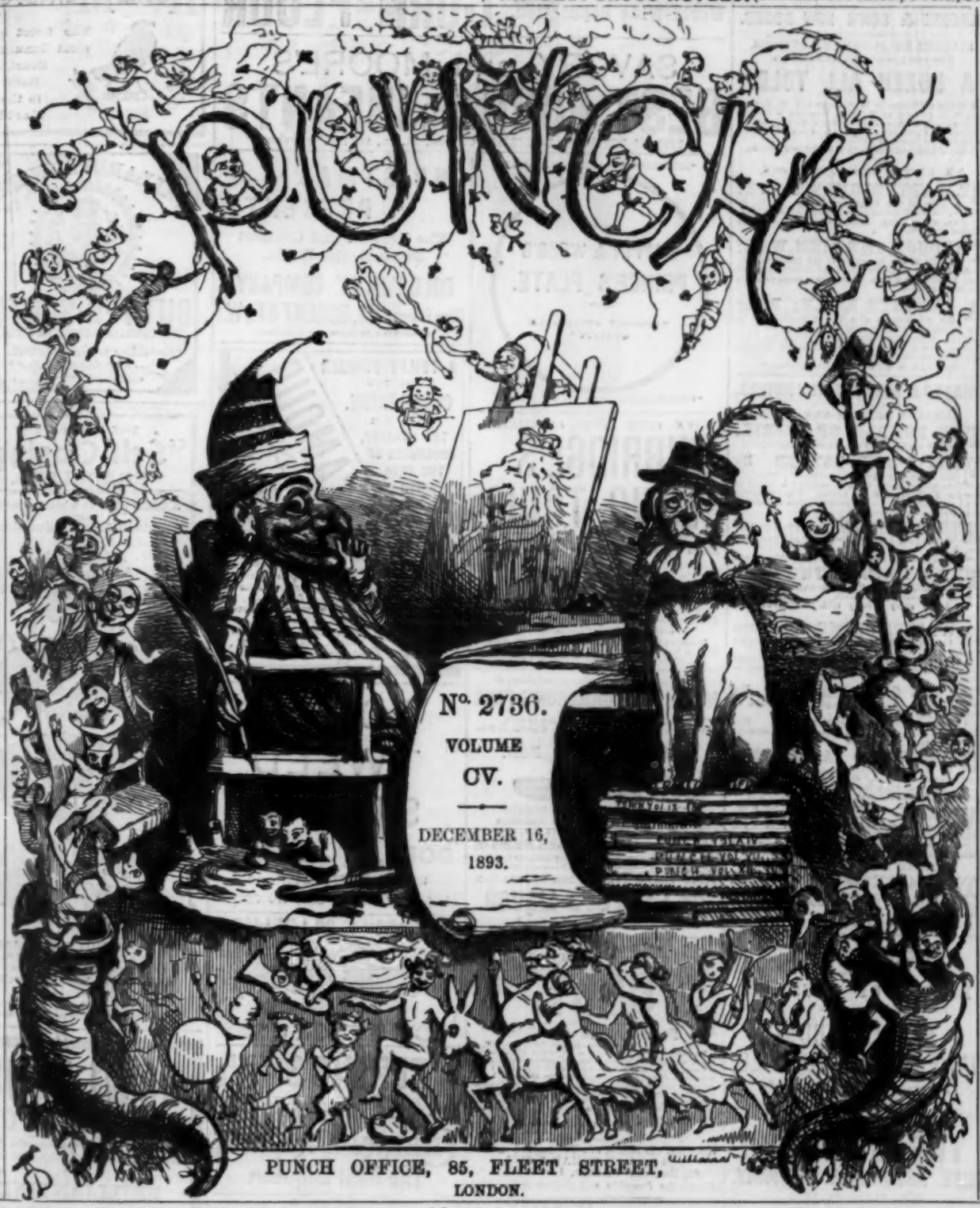

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Deanery, Carlisle, March 14th, 1878.
Sir,—I have so many inquiries on the subject of this letter, that it will greatly convenience me, and perhaps benefit many sufferers, if you permit me to say in a few words that I was almost beyond experience a martyr to gout for 25 years! I took Laville's medicines, which are simple and easy of application. I was cured completely, and after nine years trial I can affirm that they are a perfect specific and an innocent and beneficial remedy. I have tried them on friends in like circumstances, and they never fail.
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SOLD EVERYWHERE.

SEASONABLE SONNET.

(By a Vegetarian.)

YES, Christmas overtakes us yet once more.
The Cattle Show has vanished in the mists
Of time and Islington, but re-exists
In piecemeal splendour at the butcher's store.
Here, nightly, big boys blue are to the fore
With knives and choppers in their greasy fists;
And now, methinks, the wight who never lists
Yet hears the brass band on the proud first floor.
High over all rings "What d' ye buy, buy, buy?"
The meat is decked with gay rosette and bow,
While gas-jets beckon all the world and wife.
A cheerful scene? A ghastly one, say I,
Where mutilated corpses hang arow,
And in the midst of death we are in life.

AS THEY LIKED IT.—We read of the recent success at Palmer's Theatre, New York, of *As You Like It*, with all the parts played by women. Of course, everybody knows that this was a complete reversal of the practice of the stage in SHAKSPEARE's own day, when the buskin was on the other leg, so to speak; but we are not told if the passage "Doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat" was transposed to "Petticoat ought to show itself courageous to doublet and hose."

THIS SETTLED IT.—"He may be irritable," observed Mrs. R., "but remember the old saying that 'Irritation is the sincerest form of flattery.'"

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK.

Critic. "HOW 'S THE *BOOK* GOING, OLD MAN?"

Author. "OH—ALL RIGHT, I FANCY. THE PRESS HAS NOTICED IT ALREADY. YESTERDAY'S *ROSELEAVES* HAILS ME AS THE COMING *THACKERAY!*"

Critic. "AH, *I* WROTE THAT!"

Author. "DID YOU REALLY? HOW CAN I THANK YOU! ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS WEEK'S *KNACKER* SAYS THAT I 'VE BEEN FORTUNATELY ARRESTED BY MADNESS ON THE ROAD TO IDIOTCY!"

Critic. "AH, I WROTE THAT TOO!"

A PLEA FOR PLEADINGS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Last week I begged for a chance for the Briefless, and the only reply has been, that by a few strokes of the pen the Judges have ruined and undone the Junior Bar. On a day which will be known henceforth in the Temple as Bad Friday, we read the new Rules, by which in future it will be possible to have an action—*without pleadings!* Statement of Claim, Defence, Reply, Rejoinder—all disappear into a beggarly "Summons for Directions," that can be drawn by a solicitor's office-boy. Of course, amongst the silks, the change will, no doubt, be popular. These learned gentlemen can with a light heart and a heavy pocket welcome the change, which will get rid of the pleadings which it is merely a nuisance to read. But what is to become of us whose business it is to draw them?

It may possibly be said that this new arrangement will save the pockets of the clients, but what have the Judges to do with that? Does anyone imagine litigation to be anything more than a pastime, at which those who play ought to be content to pay? In a hard winter, when the wolf is consistently at our door, to take the bread out of our mouths in this way, is a proceeding which (*pace* Mr. GLADSTONE) takes the cake. I am sure Mr. GOSCHEN will welcome such an expression. In any case I appeal, Sir, through you, from the Judges to an enlightened paying public.

Yours faithfully,
L. ERNED COUNSEL.

102, *Temple Gardens, E.C.,*
Dec. 6.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.—A razor and a *tabula rasa.*

JOHN TYNDALL.

BORN AUG. 21, 1820. DIED DEC. 4, 1893.

HONEST JOHN TYNDALL, then, has played his part!
Scientist brain, and patriotic heart
Both still in the last sleep, that sadly came,
Without reproach to love, or loss to fame.
Rest, Son of Science, certain of your meed!
Of bitter moan for you there is small need;
But England bows in silent sympathy
With her whose love, chance-wounded, all may see
Steadfast in suffering undeserved as sore.
Punch speaks for all true hearts the kingdom o'er [life
When mingling tribute to JOHN TYNDALL's
With hushed compassion for his bowed but blameless wife.

A FEMININE TRIUMPH.—SHEE, Q.C., appointed Judge of the Court of Record at Salford. Naturally SHEE likes being courted. Pity it wasn't in Wales, as then they would Welshly-and-grammatically speak of "appearing before SHEE" as "appearing before *Her*." This is clearly an example of the "*SHEE who must be obeyed.*"

Murch Praised!

["Mr. JEROME MURCH, seven times Mayor of Bath, &c., and for thirty years chairman of, &c., has just published a volume, entitled *Bath Celebrities.*"]

Go to Bath, viâ book upon lap;—
No Bath bungler is here, but a rare man.
You are certain to like this Bath chap;
And there never was such a Bath chairman.

UNIVERSITY INTELLIGENCE.—The Oxford undergraduate who was caught red-(paint)-handed, and sent down for a year, forgot, no doubt, that *he* had to be well read, not the town; but a year in the country will no doubt make him as fresh as the paint itself. Curiously enough, very popular still in his College, which shows no inclination to cut the painter!

"SOMETHING LIKE A HUNTING RUN."—In the *Pall Mall* last Thursday was the account of a grand run with "the Barlow Hounds." Of course *Sandford* and *Merton* were on ponies, and out with "their beloved tutor's" pack. Mr. BARLOW, of course, is both "Master" and "Whipper-in."

THE TOPER'S TOAST.—"*Pot*-luck!"

TRIP-LETS.

[Miss YOUNG writes from North Merton Vicarage to say that her turkeys have taken to step-dancing. "First two young 'toms' bowed politely to one another, then passed on with stately tread, skipped into the air twice in the most ludicrous manner, turned, and repeated the performance."—*See Daily Graphic, December 7.*]

THE lion, fleas, and kangaroo,
Baboon, and shaving baby too,
Have all had shows—here's something new!

Terpsichore and *Turveydrop*
Have taught the turkeycock to hop,
To bow politely, skip and flop.

Like Cheshire cat, I would have grinned,
To see the fowl of Western Ind
Disport itself like LETTY LIND!

Enough of barn- and serpent-dance!
We'll give the poultry-yard a chance—
With *pas de deux*-"*toms*" let us prance!

CHARITY'S CRUX.—Charity begins at home, we are told. Perhaps. But at present, confused by rival claims and conflicting counsels, Charity seems to be "all abroad."

CHANGE OF PARTNERS. PRESIDENT CLEVELAND ASKS FOR "JUST ONE TURN" WITH MISS FREE TRADE.

"NEXT HER HEART!"

Young Muddleigh, who has been out buying underwear for his personal use, purchases at the same establishment some flowers for his ladye-love—leaving a Note to be enclosed. Imagine Young Muddleigh's horror, on returning to dress, to discover that the underwear had been sent with the Note, and the Flowers to him! Muddleigh discovered, repeating slowly to himself the contents of the Note:—" PLEASE WEAR THESE THIS EVENING, FOR MY SAKE!"

A CHANGE OF PARTNERS.

["The world should be open to our national ingenuity and enterprise. This cannot be while Federal legislation, through the imposition of a high tariff, forbids to American manufacturers as cheap materials as those used by their competitors . . . . A measure has been prepared . . . . embodying tariff reform on the lines herein suggested."—*President Cleveland's Message to Congress.*]

GROVER CLEVELAND *sings*:—

(AIR—"*Are you coming to the dancing?*")

OH! there 's only one girl in the world for whom I care a dime,
And I mean to be her partner—if you 'll only give me time.
It is nice to see her smiling and a-calling from way over,
"Are you coming to the dancing, Mister GROVER, GROVER, GROVER?"

Chorus—Are you coming, are you coming,
Are you coming to the dancing, Mr. GROVER, GROVER, GROVER?
And I say, I guess I 'm coming, Miss Free Trade, dear—as your lover!

"Come, GROVER, come!" my love will say; "just one turn in the dance,
And *we* 'll show all competitors they have but little chance.
That 's why I love you GROVER, 'cause you 're limber in your feet
And defy the other fellows, to compete, pete, pete!"

Chorus—Are you coming, &c.

Miss Protection, my old partner 's a bit *passée, entre nous*,
Yet I mustn 't all forsake her; she 's exacting and a shrew;
And to leave her quite a "Wallflower," and entirely in the shade,
Would mean ructions; yet I *must* try just one turn with dear Free Trade!

Chorus—Are you coming, &c.

So I 'll kiss her little finger, and invite her to the waltz;
Though the other turns her nose up (temper 's one of her worst faults).
But I say, "I cannot help it, dear; you 're danced quite off your feet,
And a rest will do you good, dear, I repeat, peat, peat!"

Chorus—Are you coming, &c.

"The ball-room should be open to a dancer's enterprise.
I *must* try a change of partners; your high-tariff step so tries.
It 's so stiff, and so exhausting, and a little Freedom 's sweet;
Whilst *I* take one turn with Free Trade. *You* can take a seat, seat, seat!"

Chorus—Are you coming, &c.

"Oh! she 's been and asked her mother, and her mother 's said she might.
So sit down and don't show tantrums, for they make you look a fright."
May I ask you for just one turn, Free Trade, before this dance is over?
And she answers "With much pleasure, Mister GROVER, GROVER, GROVER!"

Chorus—Are you coming, are you coming,
Are you coming for one turn, my dear, before this dance is over?
And she smiles—and I 'm her partner—and hope soon to be her lover!

"VARIETY! VA-RI-E-TY!"

"THE KILANYI Troupe" at the Palace Theatre of Varieties, with their strikingly realistic *Tableaux Vivants*, might well change their name *pro tem.* to "The Kill-any-other Troupe" that might be venturing in the same line. Of course, they are a great attraction, and would be still greater, were the Show varied from night to night, altogether omitting No. 6 in the present programme, and, in view of the popularity of "A tale of the tide," the humour of which is perceptible to everyone on account of the waggery in the tail, by substituting two or three comic for the simply classic *poses*. Mr. CHARLES MORTON, trading on his acquired store of operatic knowledge, might give us a statuette of *Les Deux Gendarmes*, who could just vary their attitudes according to the movement of OFFENBACH's celebrated duett. After a short interval of patriotic song about NELSON and "doing duty" there is a capital French clown, or clown of some nationality, whose fun is genuine, and whose imitations, animal and orchestral, are excellent and really amusing. This is a case in which, if a real bassoon or a real hen intruded itself, either would be hissed, and the false honestly preferred to the real. Altogether, except that the ballet which plays the people out, and does play them out effectually, is old-fashioned, it is an excellent evening's entertainment. The County Council ought to come in their thousands, and, like the little dog who was so pleased to see the cow jumping over the moon, they would "laugh to see such sport."

UNDER THE ROSE.

(A Story in Scenes.)

Scene XIX.—*The Drawing-room.* Mrs. Toovey *is still regarding* Mr. Jannaway, *after the manner of an elderly bird in the presence of a young and somewhat inexperienced serpent.*

Mr. Toovey (*coming to the rescue*). Excuse me, young Sir, but I don't think you quite realise who that lady *is*. (*With mild self-assertion.*) She is my wife, Sir, my Wife! And she is not *accustomed* to being hunted all over Upper Tooting, or anywhere else!

Mr. Jannaway (*to himself*). I've got this dear lady on toast. *I* can see! But I mustn't do anything ungentlemanly or I may get the sack if the governor gets to hear of it. (*Aloud.*) If I'm mistaken I'm ready to apologise; but the lady bears such a really remarkable likeness to a Mrs. Tomkinson Jones, residing (so she gave me to understand) at The Laburnums, Upper Tooting, that——

Mrs. Toovey (*fading her voice*). I do *not* reside at Upper Tooting!

Mr. Jann. (*in silky tones*). Precisely so, Madam. No more does Mrs.—hem—Tomkinson Jones!

Charles. And is *that* the only point of resemblance between your friend Mrs. Jones and my Aunt, eh?

Mr. Jann. That's a matter of opinion, Sir. I've my own. But neither the lady nor yet myself are particularly likely to forget our meeting. It was only last Saturday evening, too!

Mr. Toov. Why, then you must have met Mrs. Toovey at the Zenana Mission Conference?

Mr. Jann. Well that isn't the name *I* know it by; but if the lady prefers it, why——

Mrs. Toov. (*hoarsely*). I—I deny having ever met the young man before, anywhere; that is, I—I don't remember doing so. Take him away!

Mr. Jann. I should be most averse, of course, to contradicting a lady, and I can only conclude that she is so much in the 'abit of fetching unoffending strangers what I may venture to term, if you'll permit the vulgarity, a slap in the jaw, that such a trifling circumstance makes no impression on her. It did on *me!*

Mr. Toov. (*outraged*). Young man! are you endeavouring to suggest that my wife goes about—er—administering "slaps in the jaw" to perfect strangers at Zenana meetings?

Mr. Jann. Pardon me, I said nothing whatever about any—er—Pyjama meetings. I don't know what may go on *there*, I'm sure. The incident *I* alluded to occurred at the Eldorado music-hall.

"Why, Cornelia, my love, so you've *found* your spectacles!"

Mrs. Toov. (*to herself*). There; it's out at last! What *have* I done to deserve this?

Charles (*to himself*). The Eldorado! Why, Thea *said*—— What *can* Aunt have been up to? She's got herself into the very deuce of a hole! [Curphew *and* Althea *exchange significant glances.*

Mr. Toov. At the Eldorado? Now, do you know that's very singular—that really is very singular indeed! You're the *second* person who fancied Mrs. Toovey was there last Saturday evening! So that you see there *must* have been a lady there most extraordinarily like my wife!

Mrs. Toov. (*to herself*). Dear, good, simple Pa; *he* believes in me! After all, I've only to deny everything; he can't *prove* I was there! (*Aloud.*) Yes, Sir, and on a mere resemblance like that you have the audacity to bring these shameful charges against me—*me!* All you have succeeded in establishing is that you were in the music-hall yourself, and I doubt whether your employer would approve of a clerk of his spending his time in such places, if it came to his ears!

Mr. Jann. It's very kind of you to concern yourself on my account, Madam; but there's no occasion. It was Mr. Larkins himself gave me the ticket; so I'm not at all uneasy.

Mr. Toov. Why, dear me, that must have been the ticket Mr. Curphew—I should say, Mr. Walter Wildfire—sent me. I remember I left it with Mr. Larkins in case he could find a use for it. So you were in *my* box; quite a coincidence, really!

Mr. Jann. As you say, Sir, and not the only one neither, seeing that——

Mrs. Toov. Pa, isn't it time this young man finished the business he came about, and went away? I am not accustomed to seeing my drawing-room made use of as an office!

Mr. Toov. (*snatching up the transfer*). By all means, my love. (*To* Mr. J.) Er, I really think we should be more comfortable in the study. There—there's a bigger inkstand.

[*He leads the way to the door.*

Mr. Jann. (*following*). As *you* please, Sir. (*Turning at the door.*) I must say I think I've been most cruelly misunderstood. If I've been anxious for the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Tomkinson Jones again, any revengeful motives or lowness of that description was far from my thoughts, my sole object being to restore a piece of property which the lady, whoever she may have been, left behind her, and which, as I'appen to have brought it with me, would, if recognised, settle any question of identity on the spot. But that can wait for the present. Business first, pleasure afterwards!

[*He goes out. A silence. Presently a succession of violent sniffs proceed from behind "The Quiver." All rise in concern.*

Charles. I say, Aunt, you're not going to give way *now*, are you? That fellow hasn't frightened you?

Alth. (*kneeling down and embracing* Mrs. T.). Dearest mamma, *don't* you think you'd better tell us all about it? It was *you* who slapped that horrid little man's face—now, *wasn't* it? And serve him right!

Mrs. T. (*in a burst*). I took him for your father! Oh, what have I *said?* I never meant to admit anything! And what must you all think of me?

Curph. No one who has had the benefit of your opinions of music-halls or their entertainers, can possibly imagine you went to one with any idea of *amusing* yourself, Mrs. Toovey.

Mrs. Toov. (*without heeding him*). And Pa, what will *he* say? When I think of all the wicked stories I've had to tell that poor dear man! And after he once finds them out, there's an end of all his respect for me, all my influence over him, all my power in this house—*everything!* Why, for anything *I* can tell, Pa may actually believe I went to that detestable place on what (*to* Curphew) I suppose your friends would call the—the (*utterly breaking down*) Tee-hiddle-dy-hi!

Charles (*after a highly suspicious fit of choking*). Don't think there's any danger of that, Aunt; but look here, how if I went into the study and kicked that little cad out, eh?

Mrs. Toov. And have the whole affair in the police reports! *You're* a pretty solicitor, Charles! But Pa *knows* by now, and oh, what in the *world* am I to do?

Charles. Well, my dear Aunt, it sounds an immoral suggestion, but, as you seem to have given Uncle a—hem—slightly picturesque version of your doings last Saturday, hadn't you better *stick* to it?

Mrs. Toov. What's the use? Didn't you hear that wretch say he'd found something in the box? It's my spectacles, Charles; a pair in a Rob Roy tartan case, which Pa gave me himself, and couldn't *help* recognising! I remember now, I left them there, and—— (*The door opens.*) They're coming back!

Mr. Toov. (*entering*). That's really a very honest young fellow, my love, nothing will satisfy him but bringing in the article he's found, and seeing whether it belongs to you or not.

Mrs. Toov. (*breathlessly*). And have *you* seen it, Pa—have you *seen* it?

Mr. Toov. Not yet, dear love, not yet. He's getting it out of his great coat in the hall.

Curph. (*starting up from behind* ALTHEA). I think, if you will allow me, *I* 'll go and speak to him first. It strikes me that I may know the lady who was in that box, and I 'm naturally anxious to avoid any—— [*He goes out.*

END OF SCENE XIX.

SCENE XX.—*A few minutes later.*

Mrs. Toov. (*to herself, in a fever*). Why doesn't he come back? What are those two plotting together? Oh, if Mr. WILDFIRE imagines he will get a hold over me, so as to obtain my consent to—— I'd sooner tell Pa everything! (*To* CURPHEW, *who re-enters, smiling.*) W—where is—the other?

Curph. The other? Oh, *he* 's gone. I made myself known to him; and you would have been surprised, my dear Mrs. TOOVEY, at the immense effect my professional name had upon him. When he realised I was WALTER WILDFIRE he was willing to do anything for me, and so I easily got him to entrust his find to me.

Mr. Toov. (*inquisitively*). And what is it—a fan, or a glove? There would be no harm in showing it to *us*, eh?

Curph. Well, really, it 's so very unlikely to compromise anybody that I almost think I *might*. Yes, there can't be any objection.

[*He takes something out of his pocket, and presents it to* Mr. T.

Mr. Toov. (*mystified*). Why, it 's only a hairpin! What a scrupulously honest young man that is, to be sure!

Mrs. Toov. (*relieved*). Only a hairpin? (*Then, uneasily, to* CURPH., *in an undertone.*) Where is—you know what? Have you kept it to use for your own advantage?

Curph. (*in the same tone*). I am a very bad man, I know; but I don't blackmail. You will find it behind the card-basket in the hall. (MRS. T. *goes out;* ALTH. *draws* CURPH. *aside.*

Alth. CLARENCE. I—I *must* know; how did you come to have a—a hairpin? where did it come *from?* (*As he softly touches the back of her head.*) Oh! it was *mine*, then? *What* a goose I am?

Mr. Toov. (*as* MRS. T. *returns*). Why, CORNELIA, my love, so you've *found* your spectacles! Now where did you leave them *this* time, my dear, eh?

Mrs. Toov. Where I shall not leave them *again* in a hurry, THEOPHILUS!

Mr. Toov. Don't you be too sure of that, my love. By the way, Mr. CURPHEW, that lady of your acquaintance—*you* know, the one who made all this disturbance at the Eldorado—is she at all *like* Mrs. TOOVEY, now?

Curph. (*after reflection*). Well, really, there *is* a resemblance—at a distance!

Mr. Toov. (*peevishly*). Then it's annoying—very annoying; because it might compromise my poor dear wife, you know. I—I wish you could give her a quiet hint to—to avoid such places in future!

Curph. Do you know, Sir, I really think it will be *quite* unnecessary. [PHŒBE *enters to announce dinner.*

Mr. Toov. Dinner, eh? Yes, yes, dinner, to be sure. Mr. CURPHEW, will you take in my dau——(*correcting himself*)—oh, but, dear me, I was quite forgetting that—h'm!——

Curph. ——that Mrs. TOOVEY has been expressing an ardent impatience to close your doors on me for ever?

Mrs. Toov. (*not over graciously*). That was before—— I mean that—considering the manner in which we all of us seem to have been more or less mixed up with the music-hall of late—we can't afford to be too particular. If Mr. WILDFIRE chooses to stay, he will find as warm a welcome as—(*with a gulp*)—he can *expect!*

Curph. Many thanks, but I 'm sure you see that I can't stay here on sufferance. If I do stay it must be as——

Mrs. T. As one of the family! (*She chokes.*) That—that 's understood, of course. (*To herself.*) They knew too much!

Mr. T. (*to* Mrs. T., *chirpily, as the others precede them in to dinner*). Do you know, my love, I'd no more idea you would ever have—— Well, well, it might have been worse, I daresay. But we must never let it get out about the *music-hall*, eh?

Mrs. T. Well, Pa, *I* 'm not very likely to allude to it!

THE END.

"CRYSTAL-GAZING."—The Crystal Palace Company should adapt some of Mr. ANDREW LANG'S article on "Superstition" in this month's *Fortnightly*. Far more entertaining is the Sydenham building than any amount of "Crystal-gazing," and the directors have only to say (we make them a Christmas present of the suggestion), quoting from the article above-mentioned, "it is an ascertained fact that a certain proportion of men and women, educated, healthy," &c., &c., can obtain curious information, combined with amusement, by looking into the Crystal . . . Palace.

EXAMPLE OF "BURNING WORDS."—Lighting the dining-room fire with the torn pages of an old book.

OUR COSTLY CLIMATE.

"HULLO! OFF OUT OF TOWN SOMEWHERE!"

"OFF TO CAIRO, MY BOY!"

"CAIRO! WHY, ONLY THE OTHER DAY YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE AS POOR AS A CHURCH MOUSE!"

"THAT 'S JUST IT. I 'VE SPENT FIVE YEARS' INCOME ON CLOTHING ALREADY THIS WINTER, AND I 'M NOT WARM YET; AND I 'VE CALCULATED THAT IT 'LL TAKE SEVEN YEARS' INCOME MORE BEFORE I CAN KEEP THE COLD OUT. SO I 'M OFF TO CAIRO TO STOP AT THE BEST HOTEL—IT 'S FAR CHEAPER!"

POISON IN THE PUMP.

[A medical writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* says, "more people are killed by drinking water than are killed by drinking alcohol."]

THINK of that, teetotal folks, heed not WILFRED LAWSON'S jokes
And his gay, impromptu poems which he reads when on the stump,
Here 's a doctor says that you will indubitably do
Quite a foolish thing in swearing by your sweetly sober pump.

Surely that should give you pause when you advocate your cause,
With your button-hole adorned with tiny scrap of sky-blue silk;
There 's not half the danger in whisky, brandy, rum, or gin,
As in typhoid-bearing water or in diphtheritic milk.

We 're not all gin-sodden sots, though we do not empty lots
Of those enigmatic bottles, which to you are always dear,
Filled with liquor, washy, sweet, aërated. Such a treat
Is your execrable lemonade, your beastly ginger-beer!

Other people do not rave from the cradle to the grave.
The Frenchman takes his *petit verre*, his *Bordeaux* or his *bock*;
The German's limpid beer or his *Rheinwein* none need fear.
Even you would not be overcome by claret, say, or hock.

Then if you are truly wise, you will cease to close your eyes
To the fact that moderation is convincing, and should be
In your words, as in our drink. Then we might more kindly think
Of your thickly, sickly cocoa, and your nerve-exciting tea.

"EUREKA! EUREKA!"—His wife had heard the word. Had been told it was Greek: but what it meant she did not know. One night he came home from a bachelor smoking-party. "Oh," she exclaimed. "You absolutely reek of tobacco. *You reeker!*" Then it broke upon her like an ancient light that she was talking Greek without knowing it!

THE FESTIVE SEASON.

Precocious Infant. "Help yourself, and pass the Bottle!"

THE CHAMPION SHAVER;

Or, A Task against Time.

Largo al factotum! Shave all the world, one per minute!
Figaro beaten. *Poll Sweedlepipe* plainly not in it!
Wick of King's Road, Chelsea's champion chin-scraper, cut of it!
Romola's garrulous razor-man whipped, there's no doubt of it!

Rustic's rough stubble, or working-man's wiry chin-bristle,
Mown from his gills in a twinkling, as clean as a whistle.
Even a bristly Hibernian boar he would gaily
Tackle, and trim him as smooth as that downy young *Bailey*.

Grand Old Tonsorial Hand with the soft-soap and lather;
Knight of the Razor, of hand-sweep redoubtable—rather!
Pat—or Shagpat—Hodge or Bluebeard, blue-gill'd British Workman,
Muscovite hairy, or whiskered, moustache-twisting Turkman:

Downy-cheeked boy, or big, wire-brushy Don Whiskerando!—
All one to him! All that sharp steel and soap-lather *can* do
Here is a Barber will buckle to, blade-armed, instanter,
Challenge competitive rivals, and win in a canter.

Neat Nelly Wick (thirteen men in ten minutes) is rather
A good 'un to mow, to say naught of her champion father;
But this Grand Old Shaver would shave,—against time, too, yes, trust us!—
Elephas Primigenius (the Mammoth), or *Brontops Robustus*!

Truly a Tonsor Titanic to chin-needs to minister!
Yet are there some who declare his dexterity sinister;
Say that 'tis not without reason this bland badger-waver,
And stirrer of soap-suds, is called—well, an Artful Old Shaver.

Like most of his craft he the Gift of the Gab shares stupendously,
And takes by the nose and belathers, with soft-soap, tremendously.
They call him for custom from all sorts and sizes a cadger,
And swear that he badgers the Mob to submit to his badger.

Be that as it may—and his rivals do rail at him viciously—
If you require "a clean shave," rattled off expeditiously,
Lather that's fragrant and frothy, and steel that slides slickly,
Sit down in his chair, and he'll polish you off pretty quickly.

He's had two tough customers lately; a workman stiff-stubbled
(He looks at his gills in the glass with a glance slightly troubled),
And him the young yokel whose beard's like a big bed of thistles,
Who flops in the chair and demands to be shorn of his bristles.

To shave—against time—such a shag-beard as is this young rustic,
Is hard, and the chance of success seems a bit nubibustic.
But list! The old Champion Shaver is courteously glosing!
"But bristly, my friend, but I'll leave you clean-mown before closing!"

HIGHLY PROBABLE.

(*A Conversation Tapped on its way through the Telephone.*)

I say, how are you this morning?

Still rather weak. But the weather here is lovely, and I am enjoying myself immensely. I think I have discovered a new system.

Never mind about the tables. Thought you had gone to Nice.

No, Monte Carlo. It's more healthy, and they say that if you have success you should clear your expenses easily.

Yes, but I did not want to talk about that. You know there's been more outrages in Dublin? They have spread from Paris.

Have they? Get some Johnnie on the spot to look after them.

But I told the House that although you were in the South of France, you were in telegraphic touch with your colleagues.

What did you do that for? My doctor will be awfully angry.

I dare say. But what are you going to do about this dynamite scare?

Leave it to Rosebery; he's equal to anything and everybody.

Yes, as a rule; but not just now. He's on leave. Bad cold.

Well, let Asquith have a shot. He is a rising young man.

But he's away, too; and so is Harcourt, Spencer, Ripon, and the others. They all say they can do nothing further.

Sorry. Can I help it? Impossible to govern Ireland from Monte Carlo.

Not if you give your mind to it. But, of course, if you will go in for systems, you haven't much chance.

Well, frankly, I can't manage it. You must get some one else.

Sorry I can't.

Then what will you do?

Why, manage it myself. After all, if I have twice the years of you fellows I have four times the energy. As I am doing all the other work of the Ministry, I may as well make a complete job of it. I will do it myself!

"THE CHAMPION SHAVER!"

Mr. G. "YOU'RE A BIT BRISTLY, SIR, BUT I THINK WE SHALL POLISH YOU OFF BEFORE CLOSING TIME!!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

"THE ever-advancing *Woman*," observes one of the Baronesses, "has quite come forward this Christmas, daintily attired." Wonderful money-prizes are to be won by the lucky person who guesses the author of "Bid Me not Go," which is the Christmas story of the enterprising *Gentlewoman*.

"As for Christmas Cards being Christmassy," quoth a young Baron brusquely, "why it's all WALKER!" The Baron was about to rebuke the scion of his noble house, but discovered, on application, that the youth had been alluding to the Christmas Card publisher of that name, whose designs are not peculiarly Christmassy, but what the Baroness terms "so dainty!"

A CONDUCTOR OF HEAT.

S. HILDESHEIMER & Co.'s clever and amusing Christmas Cards will be much appreciated by young people.

Three books full of stories, to suit all ages. HUTCHINSON'S House. *Fifty-two Stories for Children*, *Fifty-two Stories for Girlhood and Youth*, and *Fifty-two Stories for Boyhood and Youth*. Just a story a week, will last the year. Collected by ALFRED H. MILES. You won't find a better if you go for Miles.

Valdmer, the Viking, by HUME NISBET, was a wonderful Dane, who, after invading England in the Tenth Century, took a trip from Thanet (having invented Ramsgate and Margate) all round America, and thought nothing of it. Those who read this will probably think something of it.

The Hoyden, written by Mrs. HUNGERFORD, and published by HEINEMANN, is the story of a rather frivolous nineteenth-century tomboy; "but," quoth the Baroness, "though it does not come within measurable distance of *The O'Connors of Ballinahinch*, it is pleasant light reading."

Mr. Gladstone's Life; Told by Himself, is an alluring title, which, in spite of the volume being issued by so respectable a house as KEGAN PAUL'S, savours of a flam. But it is genuine enough. Every word in the little volume has been spoken or written by Mr. GLADSTONE. Mr. LEECH, whilst modestly disclaiming any imposition of responsibility upon the PREMIER, has ingeniously linked passages from speeches or letters published under his name during the past sixty years. The result is a really fascinating work. Mr. GLADSTONE has always been prone to drop into autobiography. Nothing, my Baronite tells me, was more delightful than the speeches he used to deliver in the House of Commons on Friday and Tuesday nights. Some chance reference to CANNING, PEEL, or PALMERSTON brought up a flood of recollections, and Mr. G. used to chat of old times with the entranced House.

In a pleasant little book called *Essays on Idleness*, the authoress, AGNES REPPLIER, speaking of her cat, observes, "It were ignoble to wish myself in her place, and yet how charming to be able to settle down to a nap, *sans peur et sans reproche*, at ten o'clock in the morning." Surely instead of "*sans peur*" she should have written "*sans purr*," as far more applicable to a cat asleep.

"HERE is a work that I prize indeed!" quoth the Baron, surveying with unmixed pleasure two handsome volumes, readable from every point of view of type, handiness, and matter that is of substance and spirit, being a re-issue of the immortal *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, by OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. "Mind you," he continues, tenderly regarding them, "though this I admit is an *édition de luxe*, yet do I far and away prefer the simple volume without illustrations. Why illustrations? Why try to impose on us, as by artistic authority, the faces, forms, and the situations that we would infinitely prefer to idealise? Without the faculty of imagination no one can enjoy this work, pictures or no pictures: possessed of the faculty, what need of the illustrations, save so far as they may carry out our own notions of the author's meaning? If they do not, then we quarrel with them. But many thanks for these two volumes, brought out by Messrs. GAY AND BIRD (delightful association of adjective and substantive, as we have had afortime occasion to remark); for among all books, whether at this Christmas Season, when they come in quite with a Charles-Lamblike and Washington-Irvingesque flavour, or at any other time, these be most welcome to the constant lover of old Literary Friends.

YULETIDEIAN BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

A GAME OF CHANCE.

(*From an Imaginative French Source.*)

WAR had broken out between France and Great Britain. In the Mediterranean—owing to several French ironclads having got through into the Black Sea and being unable to get out again—the French fleet was shut up in Toulon harbour by a powerful English squadron. It was just at this time that some curious events were taking place in the neighbouring seaside resort of Sablettes-les-Bains, recently purchased by an English company, which was running the place as a kind of compromise between Boulogne and Monte Carlo.

"*Messieurs, faites vos jeux!*"—was heard the monotonous refrain of the burly "Croupier," who, with face rather pale, and a preoccupied air, was presiding over one of the numerous games of "*Petits-Chevaux*," combined with "*Rouge et Noir*," which were proceeding in the gorgeously-upholstered and magnificently-lighted "*Salle des Papas Perdus*" of the "*Cercle des Etrangers*" of this Paradise of the Middle Sea.

Suddenly the Croupier sprang from his seat, threw off his loose outer coat, and displayed the well-known uniform of an Officer in Her Majesty's Royal Shropshire Yeomanry Carabineers. All the other Croupiers did the same. Astonishment and dismay were depicted on the countenances of the players.

"Gentlemen," said the Croupier, "I am sorry to say you are all my prisoners. Resist, and you will be shot without mercy!"

"But I had just staked twenty thousand Louis on the black!" ejaculated a bewildered Gaul.

"You have lost your stake, Monsieur," replied the Croupier, with politeness. "It is red, not black;" and, in a moment, all the English visitors who thronged the rooms had also thrown off *their* overcoats, and the hall was filled with red-coats.

"Treachery! *Perfide Alb*——" the Gaul shouted; but ere he could rise from his seat to give the alarm to the Toulon garrison, as he had fully intended doing, a hundred swords (made in Birmingham) had passed simultaneously through his body. Their stakes fell from the trembling hands of the players.

"Then are we to understand," asked another Frenchman, who had somewhat recovered from the first shock of surprise, "that the English Government has suppressed Sablettes-les-Bains because it disapproves of the game of *Petits-Chevaux?*"

"Not at all," replied the Croupier-Officer. "It is a military *coup-de-main*, that's all. The English company running this place, was, of course, in the pay of the British War Office. By a prearranged system of signals we have been making known everything that is going on at Toulon to the British Admiral out at sea. You may perhaps have noticed what an extremely large orchestra took part in last night's free classical concert; they were English marines disguised as musicians. And the gardens attached to the Casino, which rival those of Monte Carlo, what do you think those grassy slopes crowned with olives and orange-trees are in reality? Why, the artfully-contrived glacis of the impregnable fortress inside which you are now standing, and which I have the honour to command!"

Just then the booming of cannon was heard outside.

"It is our guns playing on the defences of Toulon!" exclaimed the Officer. "Toulon is ours!"

And the treacherous Britons, having cleared the tables of the five-franc pieces still remaining on them, proceeded, with the aid of the Germans and Italians, to the dismemberment of France.

Nautical Economy.

["It is no use our building ships without the men to man them."—*Times' Correspondent.*]

PROVERB suggested by the above:—"Do not spoil the ship for a pound of tar."

NOVEL PROCEEDING.—New Issue, *Japhet in Search of Something Farther*. By MARRIOTT.

LAW AND JUSTICE *v.* DUTY "DONE."

(*An Imaginary Conversation.*)

Scene—*Opposite the Griffin.*
Time—*The present day.*
Enter two well-known personages.

Justice. Welcome, Sister. We sometimes are severed, but when we do meet the right prevails.

Law. Certainly, Sister—to a great extent. And what is the cause of our present communion?

Justice. I have to call your attention, Sister, to many great works of mercy recently performed by wielders of the pen—in fact some of my servants.

Law. Your servants are noted for their good works.

Justice. You are very kind. Well, these good servants have defended the poor, protected the weak, and denounced hypocrites.

Law. Very right indeed. But how did they manage it without my assistance?

Justice. You have a short memory. It was with your aid that they brought these good things about. Surely you have not forgotten them?

Law. Well, since I have been combined with Equity I have been doing so much excellent work that I have neither time nor inclination for the recording of details. Well, and your *protégés*, were they successful?

Justice. Certainly; they won all along the line. Never was the power of the Press manifested to better advantage.

Law. Surely they were not in actions for libel?

Justice. Yes; and although they did much good, were practically mulcted in costs.

Law. Costs! That is in my department!

Justice. And not in mine. Costs in such a matter have nothing to do with Justice!

Law. But (as you say) are inseparably connected with Law!

[*They part hurriedly.*

THINGS ONE WOULD RATHER HAVE EXPRESSED DIFFERENTLY.

She. "And you'll have to make a Speech after Dinner, won't you?"

He. "Oh—I shall just have to talk a little Nonsense to them, you know!"

She. "Ah—and Nobody's better qualified to do that than Yourself!"

THE STOUT SINGER'S SMILE.

O buxom maiden, blithe and gay,
With movements light and airy,
Some five-and-twenty stone you weigh,
Fair, fat and forty fairy!

A fairy of the music-halls,
Some men might call you ripping;
In tights, and satin coat and smalls,
You enter, gaily skipping.

It is not that which brings me joy,
Nor face, nor form entrances,
It is your smile, so very coy,
Your bashful, girlish glances.

Some twenty years ago, no doubt,
You were a slender maiden,
But now, so long you have been "out,"
With weight of years you're laden.

So when you sing of love-sick grief,
And smile so very sweetly,
I, too, behind my handkerchief,
Smile quite unseen, discreetly.

The more you sing the more you smile,
Stout charmer, winsome, winning,
Dressed like *Lord Fauntleroy*—meanwhile,
Like Cheshire Cat I'm grinning.

Then comes the end; you curtsy low,
With looks to heaven soaring;
You are extremely funny so,
I'm positively roaring.

They clap, they shout, they thump the floor,
These "gents" serenely smoking,
You kiss your hand, smile yet once more,
And leave me simply choking.

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

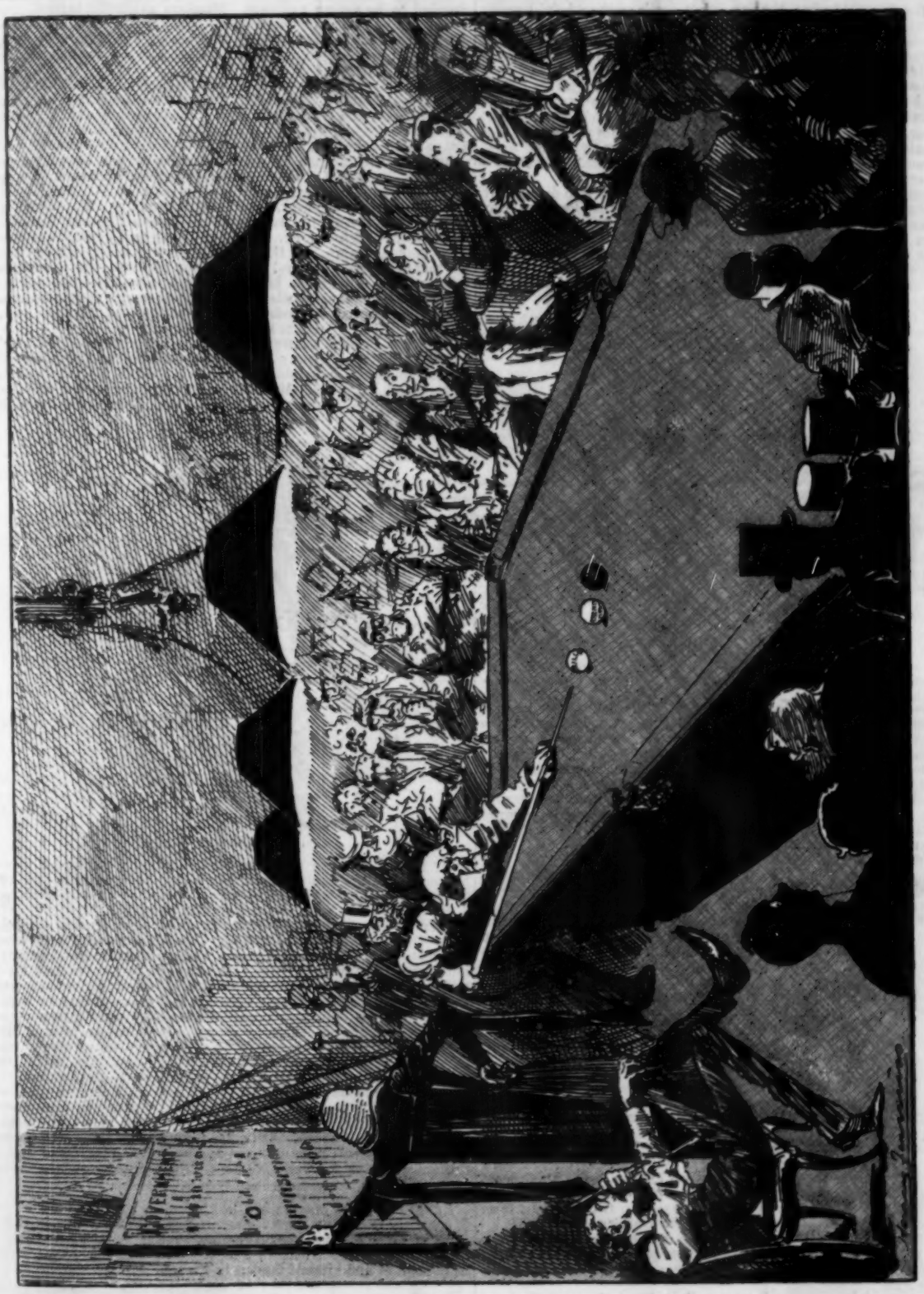
House of Commons, Monday evening, December 4.—Slight coolness sprung up between Major Rasch and Members in immediate neighbourhood. Stanley Leighton observed an insect of unfamiliar appearance disporting itself on the Major's back. Closer inspection revealed presence of others, one carefully pricking its way through his bristling hair. In these days, when microbes are a little too familiar in their habit, this curious phenomenon led to some uneasiness.

"Dear me," said Major Rasch, when his attention was delicately called to matter; "some of 'em must have got out. Only locusts, dear boy; needn't be frightened; put down question to Herbert Gardner as to importation of Russian hay which is swarming with locusts. Grand Young Gardner absent; engaged in cultivating the influenza microbe; Herbert Gladstone undertaken to answer question. I know these young Ministers; sure to pooh-pooh question. So, being an old soldier, prepared counter-movement; got handful of locusts; clapped 'em into box; brought 'em down, intending to hand box over to Herbert. They seem, however, to have anticipated proceedings. Prized lid off box, and swarmed all about; looking for wild honey, I suppose. Hope they won't catch Speaker's eye. Lend us a hand to net a few before they attack Hanbury."

If Session goes on much longer will get itself counted out. Members falling around us like leaves in wintry weather. Prince Arthur not yet back; Grandolph off to sunnier climes; John Morley, out too soon after approach to convalescence, gone to break the bank at Monte Carlo; not likely to be seen here again this side of Christmas. And now Bobby Spencer down; fallen on the field of battle. Came into lobby just now at usual brisk pace; made his way to Whip's room; drooped on threshhold. Happily nothing serious; only a passing faint; but eloquent of strain upon Members in these times. For Bobby, of course, the weight is exceptionally heavy. *Nous autres* come and go; make holiday when we can get a pair; as often as we have the heart to do so meet with light negative Bobby's touching appeal, "You dine here to-night?" But for him, always on the spot, his young head full of State cares, his manly bosom enfolding innumerable State secrets, it is different. Now the long pending blow suddenly falls, and Bobby, not without reminiscence of the elder Pitt in an earlier Parliament, falls at his post—"Young Lycidas and hath not left his peer."

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is down, down ere his prime.

"'Compels,'" said the Member for Sark, nothing if not critical. "Wouldn't you write 'compel'?"



THE PARLIAMENTARY BILLIARD TOURNAMENT. "A LONG BREAK."

"Yes, I should; but Milton didn't; and, on the whole, I prefer his style."

Business done.—Pegging away at Parish Councils Bill.

Tuesday.—Since Parish Councils Bill went into Committee, Mr. G. has been silent in I don't know how many languages. It is highest compliment to Minister in charge of a Bill that his Leader should find it possible not only to refrain from taking part in debate, but habitually to absent himself through long periods of a sitting. Henry Fowler has earned this distinction. His management of intricate measure has been excellent; conciliating Opposition without causing revolt in sensitive ranks on own side. His Parliamentary position distinctly advanced.

To-night Mr. G. drawn into fray. It was Jokim who did it. At opening of sitting Fowler resisted Amendment by Strachey making it permissible to transfer parochial trusts to management of Parish Council. After nearly two hours' debate, Rigby put up to say that Amendment on same lines standing further down, in name of the contumacious Cobb, would be accepted. "A put-up job!" cried Goschen, sternly eyeing the irreproachable Rigby.

"A put-up job!"

This too much for Mr. G. Sat bolt upright from recumbent position in which he had listened to debate. His eyes blazed; a Jovelike frown clouded his brow; his hands moved restlessly, as, leaning a little forward in attitude to spring, he waited till the unconscious Jokim, blinking at other side of table, should sit down. Spoke for only ten minutes; his energy supernal; his voice, long unused, magnificent. "A put-up job!" he repeated in scornful tones, with sweeping gesture of the arm. Drew graphic picture of Editors of new Dictionary coming upon this phrase in Parliamentary Report citing it, as thus:—

"Jon, a put-up." (*The Right Hon. J. Goschen, M.P.*)

Young Bloods behind Front Opposition Bench in historic corner, whose recesses Mellor's glance cannot penetrate, didn't like this. "Question! Question!" they roared. "It is a very interesting question," said Mr. G., ready for a tussle with them if they insisted. Pretty to see Jokim turn round and rebuke the Young Bloods on back Benches. He was the object of attack; on his head the vials of bubbling wrath overflowed. But Jokim has not lived in House of Commons all these years without its traditions of high courtesy and respect due to age and position being ingrained. He was shocked to hear speech of Leader of House broken in upon with noisy cries of "Question!" and, though they came from his own camp-followers, he did not hesitate to administer sharp rebuke. *Business done.*—Got into fresh tight place with Parish Councils Bill.

Thursday.—Quite lively to-night. Merriest evening since Home-Rule Bill left us. Began with Squire of Malwood. Gorst, who is thinking of leaving his property to found almshouses for pious ex-Solicitor-Generals, is alarmed at probable operation of this Bill. His prophetic eye sees time when Parish Council of the future will step in, snap its fingers at him (the Pious Founder); will probably introduce Conscience Clause in matutinal exercises of aged ex-Solicitor-Generals. Gorst draws up case on back of Orders; presents it in form of conundrum. Squire of Malwood hugely contemptuous. Nothing easier than to draw up trust deed in form that should obviate catastrophe foreseen by Gorst's fervid fancy.

"Just as easy," he says, "as a boy drawing an animal writes over it 'This is a lion.' You draw your trust; write 'This is an Ecclesiastical Charity,' and there you are. It will be out of purview of the Act."

This would have been all very well if Jesse Collings had not chanced to be among audience. Members evidently carried away by Squire of Malwood's sophistry. Jesse pulled them up.

"Supposing," he said, looking unutterably wise, "the boy draws an animal; writes over it, 'This is a lion,' and it turns out to be an elephant. Where are you then?"

House really didn't know; positively staggered. "Just like one of those questions the *Carpenter* in 'Through the Looking Glass' used to ask *Alice*," said George Curzon. "Floors everybody." Instead of sitting down and bravely facing difficulty suggested by Jesse's active mind, Members, catching sight of Solicitor-General contemplating nature from Treasury Bench, with one accord turned upon him. Cries of "Rigby! Rigby!" filled Chamber. Everything forgotten in excitement of this new chase. The lion lay down with the elephant, and the Squire of Malwood led them. Prince Arthur, back after a bout of influenza, joined in chase with boyish energy. Henry James and Joseph answered from opposite camp. J. G. Talbot delivered what, judging from his manner, was a funeral sermon over departed but anonymous friend; only a sentence heard here and there amid the uproar. Solicitor-General sat silent, with no other sign of consciousness than an occasional benevolent shaking of the head when the cry of "Rigby! Rigby!" rose to stormier heights.

At length Prince Arthur moved to report progress. With this pistol at his head, Rigby rose, and proceeded in his inimitable manner to deliver an opinion on the case. When lo! the strangest thing of all happened. Members on Opposition benches, who had made themselves hoarse in clamouring for Rigby, now when he

Baiting the Solicitor-General.

coyly yielded to their flattering insistence on his stating his views, hurriedly left the House. But they'd had their joke, a joke two hours long. Were not going to have it spoiled by an anti-climax.

Business done.—None; but a merry night withal.

Friday.—More about Charities as affected by Parish Councils Bill. Opposition got their back up. They love the Bill more than ever; but they will not let it pass. A great deal said about charity; but there's no lovingkindness. Encouraged by hunt of last night turn again upon Solicitor-General. A thirst for information. Prince Arthur insinuatingly suggests that House would be happy if Rigby would only give his views as to the precise meaning of phrase "parochial charities." Rigby affects not to hear. Diligently makes notes on his brief with preoccupied air. Joseph runs in from behind and pulls the hair of his right hon. friend the Squire of Malwood. The Squire, nothing loath, lets fly from the shoulder. Rumpus; somebody moves Closure; Chairman takes no notice; at end of two hours Committee divide. Coming back, approach identical question from slightly different point of view; talk round it for another two hours. At twelve o'clock we go home with uneasy feeling that for all practical purposes, as far as progress of Bill is concerned, we might as well have stopped there. *Business done.*—None.

Erratic.—There was an odd-looking misprint in *Le Figaro* for Wednesday last of an "r" for an "i," so that what was intended for "la Cour d'assises à Old Bailey" read "la Cour d'assises à Old Barley." Our friend in *Punch*, "Old Bill Barley," would be pleased to find himself famous in French.

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